

# Three ways to forge connections



**MARC MULLINS**  
MARC'S REMARKS

As an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), I embrace my denomination's purpose, which states in part: "We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world." The world is in desperate need of wholeness. In the throes of the COVID-19 virus, we are experiencing brokenness politically, theologically, socially and economically.

To help us move toward wholeness, we must be diligent to communicate and connect with those who we perceive as different from, or opposed to, ourselves. By connection, I mean the intentional act of recognizing others as viable human beings, each deserving of respect. We have witnessed such connection as it was demonstrated among athletes from around the world in the recent Olympic Games.

Here are three ways we can connect despite our differences with others.

### Mirroring

Steven Covey has said, "Most people don't listen with the intent to understand; most listen with the intent to reply." How many times have you been engaged in a conversation where the other person didn't appear to hear a word you said but was just waiting to interject so they could say what was on their mind?

Mirroring is repeating to the speaker what you've heard them say. Statements

such as, "If I understand you correctly, this is what I heard you say ..." can help clarify what the other person is saying.

### Empathizing

Dr. Harville Hendrix defines empathy as "the capacity for one individual to imagine or experience the emotional state of another person even when they have not had a similar experience."

Who, while watching the Olympics, didn't cringe when seeing a runner stumble and fall when in the race for a medal? Years of hard work in training solely impacted in one brief moment. When we strive to imagine what the other person is feeling, based on their experiences shared, we can begin to have a sense of connecting with that person. And that connection can evoke understanding, safety and trust.

### Validating

Many people talk at, around or over each other rather than listen to truly understand each other. We can take a different approach. When in conversation with someone we don't see eye-to-eye with, we can choose to say, "Although I don't feel the same as you, what you've shared helps me better understand. I can see why you'd think that."

We can promote wholeness in the world as we strive to let people know we hear them (mirroring), understand them (empathizing), and that even though we may not share their particular view, we still respect their right to believe as they do and regard them as valid human beings (validating).

*Marc Mullins is co-pastor of the First Christian Church of Pendleton.*

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### Pendleton library offers 'STEM-ulating' materials

PENDLETON — The Pendleton Public Library will unveil its newest offerings during an event it promises will be "STEM-ulating."

Patrons soon can check out STEAM-themed activities and gadgets as easy as checking out a book. The public is invited to take a test drive with library staff Friday, Aug. 13, at 10:30 a.m. at 502 S.W. Dorion Ave. The library items include a programmable rover, Sphero mini robot balls, drones and more. Also, the chief engineer of Pendleton's UAS Test Range and his team will be conducting drone demonstrations.

The library is adding a series of activities dedicated to the STEAM fields of science, technology, engineering, the arts and math to its popular Library of Things section, thanks in part to a grant from Pacific Power Foundation. It's all part of Pacific Power's effort to strengthen its communities and build brighter opportunities for the future by creating and supporting hands-on, inclusive learning opportunities for children, teens and young adults.

The Library of Things already offers patrons access to free regional museums, a telescope, a paddleboard and bocce balls, as well as wifi hotspots and Chromebooks. In addition, the library will use the materials to host a series of STEAM-focused events and conduct outreach to area schools.

Also, on the last Tuesday of each month, the library will host a STEAM-themed Crafternoon. It will feature hands-on projects for children ages 3 and up — the first will be held Tuesday, Aug. 31, at 4:30 p.m. The library also is planning to reach out to science teachers at area middle schools and high schools and a local home school association to plan lessons and provide materials for in-class instruction.

For more information, call 541-966-0380 or visit [www.pendleton.or.us/library](http://www.pendleton.or.us/library).

### Organizers reschedule economic summit

HERMISTON — The Eastern Oregon Women's Coalition and sponsors of the 2021 Eastern Oregon Economic Summit are rescheduling the event for Oct. 7-8 at Hermiston High School.

"Out of an abundance of caution related to the recent increase of COVID-19 cases in Oregon and because the Economic Summit is a large indoor event, we are rescheduling for early fall," said Bobby Levy, president of the Eastern Oregon Women's Coalition. "We are excited to bring this event back into the region in 2021 and believe the new dates will accommodate better engagement for attendees."

The agenda, including the field and industry tours, will remain the same and tickets will automatically be transferred to the new dates. Hotel reservations at the Holiday Inn Express in Hermiston made with the event's discount code also will be automatically transferred to the new dates.

The summit kicks off Thursday, Oct. 7, with industry tours and a dinner/reception, and continues Oct. 8, with a general session and breakout discussions. Transportation will be provided for the tours. Tickets, which range from \$25-\$40, are available at [www.easternoregonsummit.com](http://www.easternoregonsummit.com).

### Farm Bureau seeks photos for calendar

SALEM — The Oregon Farm Bureau is seeking photographs featuring all aspects of Oregon agriculture for possible inclusion in its 2022 Oregon's Bounty Calendar.

Photos can show the products, people, production and landscape — anything that depicts the beauty, technology, culture or tradition of family farming and ranching in Oregon. Everything from farmers markets and fields in bloom to ranch scenes, farmers preparing for harvest and more are appropriate. Horizontal, high-resolution images — both close-ups and panoramic views — are sought of all types of agriculture in all seasons.

The deadline for submissions is Sept. 15. Photographers do not have to be members of the farm bureau to send an image.

Everyone who submits a picture and provides their mailing address will receive a complimentary copy of the calendar, which is valued at \$20. Those whose photographs are selected will receive photo credit in the publication.

The award-winning calendar is mailed to more than 64,000 farm bureau members across the state and thousands more are distributed throughout the year.

Submission instructions and rules are available at [www.oregonfb.org/calendar](http://www.oregonfb.org/calendar). For questions, contact Anne Marie Moss at 503-399-1701 or [annemarie@oregonfb.org](mailto:annemarie@oregonfb.org).

— EO Media Group

# Sulphur buckwheat endemic to West



**BRUCE BARNES**  
BLOOMIN' BLUES



varieties with large, erect, bright yellow umbels, others with cream-colored umbels, and low-growing, yellow to red umbels on the ground.

**Name:** Sulphur Buckwheat  
**Scientific Name:** *Eriogonum umbellatum*  
This highly variable plant is found in varied habits, from sagebrush desert and foothills to alpine ridges, talus slopes and rock crevices. It is found from British Columbia to Alberta and Montana, and south to California to New Mexico. In the U.S., there are at least 47 known varieties of the plant, of which 11 are in Oregon.

All the varieties of this plant have their flowers borne in umbels or compound umbels. They may be shrubs or herbs, and the flowers vary from white to yellow or red. The striking flower umbels in the Blues include

had medicinal uses for some yellow-flowered varieties of this plant and also used the leaves for a tea. Medicinal uses included treatment of ptomaine poisoning, colds, sores, stomachaches, burns, lameness, rheumatism and maternal fevers following a birth.

**Where to find:** I've seen this plant along the roadside on Highway 11 into Pendleton, and along Ruckel Ridge at upper elevations in the Blues.

*Bruce Barnes directs Flora ID, producing plant ID software, found at [flora-id.org](http://flora-id.org). Reach him at [flora.id@wtechlink.us](mailto:flora.id@wtechlink.us).*

### Master bonsai teacher to lead workshop

PENDLETON — People can receive lessons on sculpting, shaping, wiring and tree care during an upcoming bonsai tree workshop.

Lee Cheattle, a master bonsai teacher from Tigard, will offer the class Wednesday, Aug. 18, from 5:30-9:30 p.m. and Thursday, Aug. 19, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The workshop will be at the home of Roy and Valerie Conner, 414 N.W. Fourth St., Pendleton.

Cost of the four-hour workshop is \$80 and includes your own juniper tree. Class sessions are limited to eight people, and pre-registration is required. To register for either class, contact [vmconner@msn.com](mailto:vmconner@msn.com) or 503-453-7193.

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